(c) and (d) Consequent to the increase in traffic at the new airport, BIAL has also made additional investments for increasing the capacity of the new airport. Thus, the scope for cost recovery would also undergo a change.

Modernisation of non-metro airports

1097. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government's commitment to modernize 35 non-metro airports could not be materialized so far;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that this non-materialisation of modernization in non-metro airports is becoming a stumbling block in the expansion of the sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The modernisation of non-metro airports is proceeding as planned and would be completed, by March, 2010.

Scrapping of service tax on air tickets

1098. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to scrap service tax on business and first class tickets for international journeys;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government has any such plans for domestic flights also?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

Objections to greenfield airports

1099. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi International Airport Ltd. M/s. GMR has objected to development of proposed new greenfield airport at Noida;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether similar objections were raised by Airport Authority of India (AAI) in Hyderabad, Bangalore and other metros where greenfield airports were being set up; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has pointed out that as per

Airport Infrastructure Policy, 1997, no Greenfield airport is to be allowed within an aerial distance of 150 Km. of an existing airport. DIAL has prepared a Master Plan for the development of Indira Gandhi International Airport to cater to a demand of 1000 million passengers in a phased manner till 2026. The Master Plan takes into account the catchment area in and around Delhi including Greater Noida which is within the 150 Km. radius.

(c) and (d) The greenfield airports at Bangalore and Hyderabad were planned in view of growing traffic and constraints in expanding the capacity of the existing airports to meet the demand.

Demand and availability of pilots in the country

1100. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country continues to suffer the shortage of commercial pilots;

(b) if so, the demand and availability of pilots in the country as on 1st January, 2008 with the number of Indian and foreign pilots engaged by Government and private companies, category-wise;

(c) whether there is any proposal with Government to set up new institutes for the training of pilots and also to increase the capacity of existing ones; and

(d) if so, the details thereof for the duration of eleventh Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Civil aviation industry in the country is facing a shortage of type rated pilots. In order to bridge the gap between the demand and availability of pilots, foreign pilots have been engaged by various airline operators. The airline-wise break up of Indian and foreign pilots as on 01.01.2008 is Indigo-88, 84; Paramount Airways-03, 11; Blue Dart-06, 10; Spice Jet-152, 53; Air Deccan-324, 141; Alliance Air-65, 40; Go Air-52, 14; Kingfisher Airlines-419, 110; Jet Airways-799, 276; Jet Lite-230, 13; Air India-622, 66 and Air India Express-44, 79.

(c) and (d) It has been decided to establish a world class flying training institute at Gondia, Maharashtra and to upgrade and modernise the existing training infrastructure facilities of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) to enhance its training capacity from 40 to 100 pilots per year. Also the other flying clubs are provided necessary assistance by way of allocation of trainer aircraft through Aero Club of India and Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

Sales Tax on ATF

1101. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry recently held a conference of Chief Ministers to apprise them of the immediate need of infrastructure development;

(b) if so, the outcome of above conference;

(c) whether the issue of reducing the Sales Tax on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) has come before the conference; and